

REVIVING THE GRADE OF LIEUTENANT-GENERAL.

JUNE 22, 1898.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. HULL, from the Committee on Military Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. Res. 162.]

The Committee on Military Affairs, to whom was referred the joint resolution (H. Res. 162) to revive the grade of lieutenant-general in the United States Army, report the same back to the House with the recommendation that it do pass with the following amendment:

Strike out of lines 8 and 9, after the words "United States," the words "not below the grade of major-general."

Your committee expresses the opinion that the general commanding should have rank not less than that of lieutenant-general, thus giving our Army symmetrical form and most effective organization.

In foreign armies the number of general officers, including the grades of lieutenant-general and what corresponds thereto, and higher grades, is, for instance, in Brazil, 4; in England, 46; in Germany, 152; in Austria, 157; in Italy, 57; and in Japan, 16. These consist of field marshals, generals, and lieutenant-generals. In the Confederate army during the civil war there were 8 full generals and 19 lieutenant-generals.

The organization of our Army on a correct basis should provide the commanding general with proper rank, one commensurate with the important duties and grave responsibilities intrusted to him. The accepted rule is that a general commands an army, a lieutenant-general an army corps, a major-general a division, and a brigadier-general a brigade.

The revival of the grade of lieutenant-general would still leave the grade of general that might be conferred by Congress for meritorious and gallant services.

In the Fifty-third Congress, third session, Report No. 1648, the Committee on Military Affairs, by Mr. Outhwaite, its chairman, made a report in regard to the grades of general and lieutenant-general of the Army, from which we quote the following statement:

George Washington was commissioned by the Continental Congress June 17, 1775, to be general and commander-in-chief of "the Army of the United Colonies."

Washington resigned that office December 23, 1783. During that time he held really the rank of general, but it was under a commission from the Continental Congress, and not under our present Constitution.

The act of May 28, 1798, authorized the President of the United States, whenever he might deem it expedient, to appoint, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, a commander of the Army, who, being commissioned as lieutenant-general, may be authorized to command the armies of the United States. Under this act Washington was nominated July 2, 1798, confirmed July 3, 1798, and commissioned by President Adams July 4, 1798.

The next act is that of March 3, 1799. This provides that a commander of the Army shall be appointed and commissioned by the style of "general of the armies of the United States, and that the present office and title of lieutenant-general shall thereafter be abolished."

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The next act on the subject was the joint resolution approved February 15, 1855. This says that "the grade of lieutenant-general be, and the same is hereby, revived in order that when in the opinion of the President and Senate it shall be deemed proper to acknowledge the eminent services of a major-general of the Army in the late war with Mexico in the mode already provided for in subordinate grades, the grade of lieutenant-general may be specially filled by brevet, and by brevet only, to take effect from the date of such rank and service: *Provided, however,* That when the said grade of lieutenant-general by brevet shall have once been filled and shall have become vacant, this joint resolution shall cease and be of no effect."

Under that joint resolution of February 15, 1855, General Scott was nominated, confirmed, and commissioned March 7, 1855, to rank from March 29, 1847.

The act of February 29, 1864, which revived the grade of lieutenant-general, authorizes the President, "whenever he shall deem it expedient, to appoint a lieutenant-general from among those officers in the service not below the rank of major-general most distinguished for courage, skill, and ability, who, being commissioned as lieutenant-general, may be authorized, under the direction and during the pleasure of the President, to command the armies."

The next act in order, July 25, 1866, to revive the grade of general, authorizes the President to appoint, from among the distinguished officers of the military service, one to command the armies, etc.

Under this act General Grant was appointed July 25, 1866, and Sherman was promoted to the grade of lieutenant-general, vice Grant appointed general.

Subsequently, March 4, 1869, General Grant took his seat as President of the United States, and upon that date General Sherman was promoted from lieutenant-general to general, and General Sheridan, the senior major-general, was promoted to be lieutenant-general, vice Sherman, both dating from March 4, 1869.

The next act, July 15, 1870, provided that the offices of general and lieutenant-general "shall continue until a vacancy shall occur in the same and no longer, and when such vacancy shall occur in either the said offices, immediately thereupon all laws and parts of laws creating said office shall become inoperative and shall by virtue of this act from thenceforward be held to be repealed."

The act of March 3, 1885, authorized the appointment of General Grant to the grade of general on the retired list.

His death, July 23, 1885, left the Army without a general and Sheridan commanding the Army as lieutenant-general.

When General Sheridan was at the point of death an act was passed, June 1, 1888, discontinuing the grade of lieutenant-general, which he held at that time, and merging it into the grade of general, to continue during the lifetime of General Sheridan only and then ceasing. He was appointed general the same day and died soon after. (Congressional Record, January 18, 1895, p. 1183.)

In accordance with a joint resolution of Congress approved by the President February 5, 1895, the grade of lieutenant-general was again revived in order that it might be specially conferred, "when, in the opinion of the President and the Senate, it shall be deemed proper to acknowledge distinguished services of a major-general of the Army," but with the provision that the resolution should expire and be of no effect when the said grade should have once been filled and become vacant. Under this resolution General Schofield was appointed to the grade of lieutenant-general and held that grade until September 29, 1895, when he was retired by operation of law.